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The Friday Letter

Vol. 7 No. 21

December 4, 1987

Hundreds View NERO School Lunch Week Exhibit

NERO celebrated National School Lunch Week on October 14 by inviting the general public and all employees in the Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. federal building to view its display in the main lobby atrium. The theme for this year was, "School Lunch: It Makes A World Of Difference." The event, coordinated by Special Nutrition Programs (SNP) nutritionist Claudia E. Smith, with the assistance of the SNP staff, attracted over 500 people during the course of the day.



Claudia E. Smith, coordinator for the event, hangs posters depicting National School Lunch Week at display table.

A variety of USDA commodities were displayed and some offered for sampling included peanut butter, cheddar cheese, process cheese, roasted peanuts, pineapple tidbits, and SNP-made trail mix consisting of raisins, peanut

(Lunch continued page 2)

MARO Participates in APWA Conference

MARO regional and Caribbean Area Office (CAO) employees recently participated in the American Public Welfare Association's (APWA) northeast regional conference. The theme of the annual conference, held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, was "Families in Transition." It raised issues needed to help launch families into the 21st century. Workshops held over the 4-day conference examined the needs of changing families and resources necessary to address those needs.

Peter Santos, MARO's director of Family Nutrition Programs, participated in a workshop on food stamp education and training programs entitled, "Impact on First Year of Work Requirements in Food Stamps." Santos led the workshop along with Jerry W. Friedman, Pennsylvania's deputy secretary for income maintenance, Department of Public Welfare, and Maura Cullen, an APWA policy analyst. They included a discussion of the newly mandated education and training programs and what states are doing in this area.



Peter Santos (right) presents information about Puerto Rico's cashout experience as Jaime Rivera, director, CAO, looks on.

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granules, and fig nuggets. Nutrition and program-related brochures were handed out by staff who readily answered questions on child nutrition programs and food distribution. Samples of menus developed for National School Lunch Week were also displayed and coordinating recipes distributed.



Maureen Rankin, Food Distribution, and Steve Stathopoulos, chief, Food Distribution, cut up USDA cheddar cheese made available for sampling.



(Left to right) SNP Director John Magnarelli, Regional Administrator Harold McLean, and SNP staffer Jane Quinn greet a gentleman who stopped by to see what FNS had to offer.

-Story and Photos by
NERO Public Affairs Staff

(APWA continued from page 1)

Santos also led a workshop with three key members of CAO: Jaime Rivera, director of CAO; Luis Rosario, financial analyst; and John Vega, program manager. The workshop dealt with Puerto Rico's 5-year experience with cashout payments to participating households. Puerto Rico's assistant secretary for the Nutrition Assistance Program, Luis Aguayo, also participated in the workshop, called "Cashout Payments in Food Stamps; the Puerto Rican Experience."



John Vega (left), listens while Luis Aguayo stresses a point about the Nutrition Assistance Program.

-Story by Linda Feldman
Photos by Joe Dunphy
MARO Public Affairs Staff

"Just Say No" -- An FNS Priority



Employee of the Month Award

Carrie Pope, secretary, Child Nutrition Division, was recently presented with the Employee of the Month Award for September by Administrator Anna Kondratas.

Pope was presented with an Employee of the Month Certificate, a ribbon, and a \$200 cash award for her creativity and initiative in developing a system to receive, track, classify, and process thousands of Key Element Reporting forms for the Child Nutrition Division.

In addition, the Child Nutrition Division has the honor of displaying the Employee of the Month banner in the Division for a month.

-Story by Personnel Division

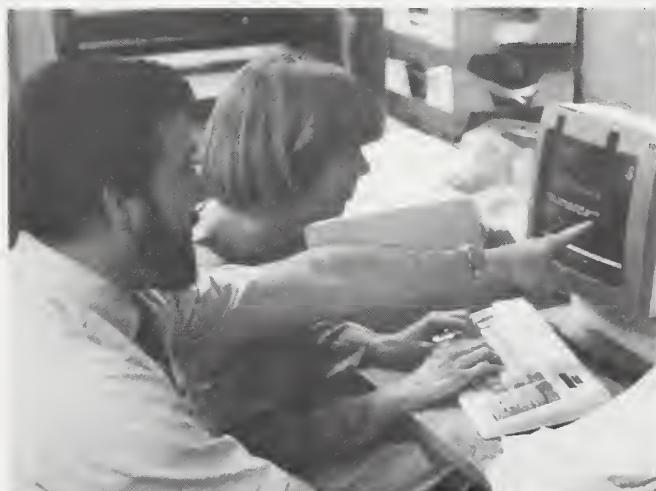


Pictured (left to right) are Robert Eadie, chief, Program Analysis and Monitoring Branch; Carrie Pope, secretary; Administrator Anna Kondratas; and Deputy Administrator George Braley.

Let Your Fingers Do the Walking

How often have you thought that there ought to be an easier way to research a topic? The Special Nutrition Program (SNP) staff of the Southeast Regional Office (SERO) has been dealing with this problem. Ed Campbell, former supervisor of SERO's SNP schools/food distribution unit said, "We needed a way for a person researching the background on a policy issue, preparing for a management evaluation, or negotiating corrective action with a state agency to access all related documents issued over a period of time. With each passing year, a larger and larger body of operating instructions accumulate such as regional policy memos, letters to individual states or program sponsors, and documented telephone conversations."

Campbell, Food Program Specialist Nancy Hague, and other members of the schools/food distribution staff decided to do something about the problem and developed a computerized index that allows staff to quickly find all relevant memos, instructions, regulations, or citations that relate to a specific topic.



Ed Campbell and Nancy Hague check out documents on their computerized index.

Hague used dBase III software to create a program that groups all available information into a document index. The document index consists of two files: the "document file" contains information relating to the document itself, such as date of issuance, identifying number, and file code. The "topic file" contains information relating to the subject matter of the document. Some documents may relate to only a single topic, while others may relate to numerous topics.

(SERO continued page 4)

Give To Operation Care And Share



The Care and Share Program was begun by President Reagan to encourage Federal employees to participate in volunteer assistance efforts. Over the past few years, USDA has collected money, canned goods, and clothing to be distributed through a variety of organizations.

This year, the effort for the Christmas season will be directed toward Van Ness Elementary School, USDA's adopted school. This school is in a very poor area of southwest Washington, D.C. It has no PTA and lost all its special programs due to a decline in enrollment. There are many needs—corporate and individual. The majority of the children are from welfare homes in heavy drug use neighborhoods. All donations will be greatly appreciated and may take the form of money, canned food, or toys. Gift items should be wrapped and marked as to specific sex and age/grade (K-6).

The principal of Van Ness Elementary School indicated a need for "transportation assistance" for the children whenever they are scheduled to take field trips, etc. Anyone wishing to contribute to this fund should so designate with their contribution.

Donations should be given to Vicky Urcuyo, Room 1113, by December 9 so they can be delivered to the Department by December 10. She is available to answer questions at 756-3057.

Directives Cancellation Campaign A Whopping Success

In March, the Information and Records Management Branch, Information Resources Management Division (IRMD), notified headquarters offices of a cancellation campaign to purge all

unnecessary directives from the FNS Directives Management System.

Headquarters offices cancelled 81 percent (34) of the 42 instructions designated for cancellation. The remaining eight instructions are now being revised. In addition, during the campaign, headquarters offices identified an additional nine directives that needed to be cancelled and initiated cancellation. Removing these 43 directives from the FNS Directives Management System has given IRMS a head start on its project to totally automate the system.

Benefits realized from this campaign include a reduction in costs to store, reprint, distribute, read, and file outdated directives. In addition, there will be an improvement in the overall currency of permanent information disseminated agencywide.

Many thanks to the headquarters offices that helped make this campaign such a success.

-Story by Information and Records Management Branch

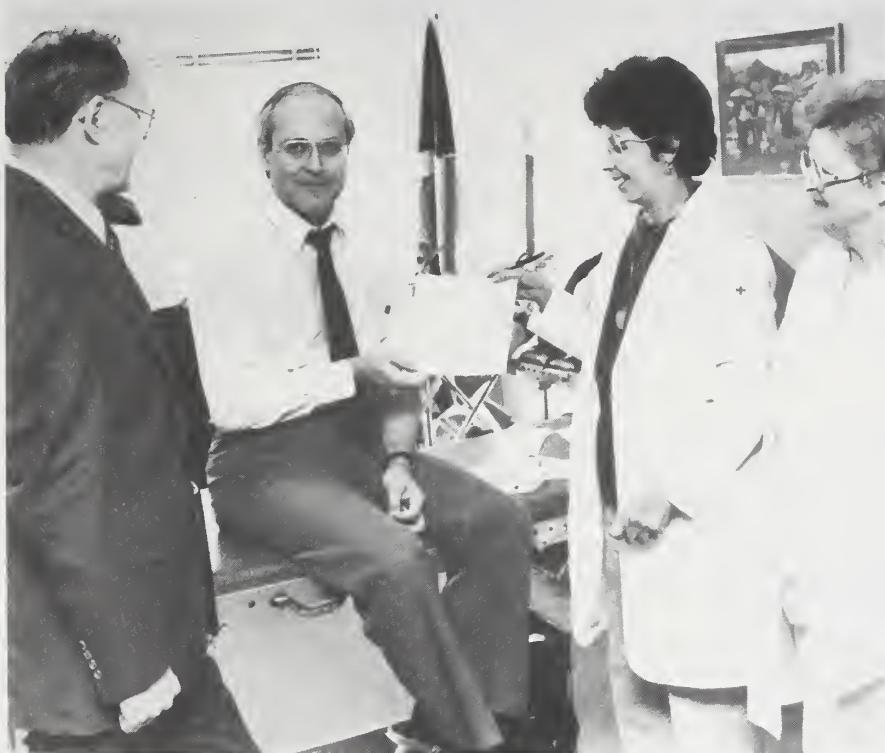
(SERO continued from page 3)

After compiling and refining a list of standard topics, unit members began classifying existing documents. So far, all FNS Instructions relating to food distribution and school nutrition programs and all regional policy memoranda dating back to 1980 have been entered into the document index. Soon, memoranda to individual states and even telephone conversation records will be added. Eventually, correspondence relating to audit and review findings may also be a part of the index.

Now when SERO SNP staff needs to find information on a topic, they start by letting their fingers do the walking on the computer keyboard.

-Story and Photo by Kent Taylor
SERO Public Affairs Staff

Giving Blood is Easy



David Walters (second from left) receives Certificate of Appreciation from Marie Glitzner, supervisory nurse, Red Cross Mobile Unit. Also shown are William Burke, chief, Services Branch, Personnel Division, and Natalie McCarthy, Headquarters Health Unit nurse.

David Walters, Program Development Division, received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Red Cross and a congratulatory letter from Administrator Anna Kondratas on the occasion of his latest blood donation in October. Walters has been giving blood to the Red Cross for 25 years and has donated well over 100 pints for his fellow citizens. He says he remembers the first time he donated blood while a college student in Indiana and found "it was easy, didn't hurt, and was a simple way of helping people."

-Story by Personnel Division

MCSC Recognizes Two Employees

Minneapolis Computer Support Center (MCSC) Chief Dave Saarela (right) recently presented award certificates to Eileen Bunn (left), computer analyst, and Lois Wiehle, data control clerk, for outstanding achievements.

Bunn received an award for her continuing superior support of the MCSC's systems development and operational activities, and Wiehle was recognized for sustained high quality work contributing to accurate and timely production of automated reports.



-Story and Photo by
Minneapolis Computer Support Center

Food Programs Participation Update

Following are preliminary estimates of participation in the Federal-State food assistance programs for the month of September with comparisons to the previous month and to the same month of last year.

	<u>Sep. 1986</u>	<u>Aug. 1987</u>	<u>Sep. 1987 2/</u>
<u>Food Stamp Program: 1/</u>			
People participating (mil.)	19.1	18.6	18.4
Value of bonus coupons (\$ mil.)	860.3	846.5	837.5
Average bonus per person	\$ 45.11	\$ 45.52	\$ 45.60
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	951.2	942.9	933.8
<u>National School Lunch Program:</u>			
Number of schools participating (thous.)	89.9	90.2	90.2
Children participating (mil.)	23.6	3.5	23.5
Children reached with free or reduced price lunches (mil.)	10.9	2.1	10.6
Percentage of lunches served free	40.2	62.4	39.4
Percentage of lunches served at reduced price..	5.5	5.4	5.7
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	370.0	36.8	367.0
<u>School Breakfast Program:</u>			
Number of schools participating (thous.)	35.2	37.4	37.4
Children participating (mil.)	3.3	.7	3.4
Percentage of breakfasts served free or at reduced price	87.7	92.8	87.2
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	44.0	8.4	48.2
<u>Child Care Food Program:</u>			
Number of meals served in centers (mil.)	33.6	27.3	34.4
Number of meals served in homes (mil.)	23.9	25.4	26.9
Percentage of all meals served free	77.1	76.8	77.2
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	41.2	40.0	46.1
<u>Special Supplemental Food Program (WIC):</u>			
People participating (mil.)	3.4	3.4	3.4
Food cost (\$ mil.)	107.5	114.1	114.3
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	140.7	139.9	152.2
<u>Commodity Supplemental Food Program: 3/</u>			
People participating (thous.)	135.8	159.5	160.6
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	2.4	2.7	2.8
<u>Food Distribution to Indians and Needy Families:</u>			
Number of projects in operation	106	107	107
People participating (thous.)	142.2	146.9	145.0
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	4.1	4.3	4.3
<u>Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program:</u>			
Total USDA cost (\$ mil.)	66.4	70.0	68.9

1/ Puerto Rico has been excluded from all months.

2/ Data collected as of November 24, 1987.

3/ Includes data for Commodity Elderly as of January 1987.

"Just Say No" Posters To Be Exhibited

David Hamer, assistant deputy administrator for Financial Management, stopped by the Public Information Office last week with a portfolio of posters his father had drawn on "Just Say No" to drugs.

With the agency actively promoting the message of drug prevention, we are pleased to present Mr. Hamer's original pen and ink drawings in a week-long display in the POC 8th floor foyer beginning Monday, December 7.

A self-taught artist and now retired from federal service, Mr. Hamer has been drawing posters since the 1930's on topics that range from savings bonds to race relations to drug prevention. His work is hard-hitting, graphic, and sure to illicit a response, but as Mr. Hamer says, "None of my work is pretty because the issues aren't pretty."

Everyone is encouraged to visit the 8th floor to see these remarkable posters.



including the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs, Child Care Food Program, and the Food Distribution Program. FNS program recipients who participate in NET activities are more knowledgeable about wise use of the foods provided by these USDA food assistance programs. Using the school cafeteria as a learning place to apply this knowledge helps our children achieve and maintain a nutritional status.

NET aims to build good eating habits by teaching the fundamentals of nutrition to children, parents, educators, and food service personnel. Through grants to state agencies, NET funds provide for instruction and training in nutrition, nutrition education, and food service management, including development of curriculum and other teaching materials.

During Fiscal Year 1987, the 57 participating state and territorial agencies are giving special recognition to the accomplishments of the NET Program over the past 10 years.

-Story by Martha Poolton
Nutrition and Technical Services Division

NET Program Celebrates Its 10th Anniversary

November marked the 10th anniversary of the Nutriton Education and Training (NET) Program which was authorized by Congress on November 10, 1977 through an amendment to the National School Lunch Act. The program is for all children, teachers, and food service



personnel in public and private nonprofit schools and child care institutions. NET contributes to the goals of all Child Nutrition Programs,

Mark your calendar and get out your Christmas decorations. It's time to party!



December 17 between 2:00-4:00 p.m. will be the 11th floor annual Christmas party. As part of the festivities, Administrator Kondratas and Associate Administrator Crow will judge all office decorations and present an award for the best door, the best tree, and the best decorated area.

There'll be plenty of food and drinks, so plan to come.

Job Opportunities

FNS is seeking to fill the vacant positions listed below. To be considered for one of them, submit an up-to-date SF-171, Application for Federal Employment, and current performance appraisal to the appropriate personnel office. If you are interested in a headquarters position, apply to the Operations Branch, Personnel Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Alexandria, Virginia

22302. Apply directly to headquarters office for all GM-14 and 15 positions. For regional positions, apply directly to the regional office. For details on the requirements for any of the positions listed below, consult the official vacancy announcement. These are posted on designated bulletin boards or copies can be obtained from the appropriate regional or headquarters personnel office.

Friday Letter Vacancy Listing By Vacancy Number

JOB TITLE	AREA OF CONSID.	SERIES	GRADE	CLOSING DATE	VACANCY NUMBER	OFFICE LOCATION
o Clerk-Stay in School	(A)	GW-303	1/2	Open	88-SIS	FNS
o Clerk/Typist	(L)	GS-322	2/3/4	Open until filled	None	FNS
o Secretary/Typing	(A)	GS-318	4/5/6	Open Continuous	88-999	FNS
o Management Analyst	(A) Schedule B (GS-11 Potential)	GS-343	5/7	12/15/87	87-145A	IRMD
o Management Analyst	(G) Prom Pot to GS-11	GS-343	5/7	12/15/87	87-145	IRMD
o Secretary-Typing	(USDA) Prom Pot to GS-6	GS-318	4/5	12/14/87	87-148	PED
o Pers Actions Clk-Typg	(USDA)	GS-203	3/4/5	12/14/87	87-149	PED
o Secretary-Typing	(FNS-H)	GS-318	5	12/8/87	87-153	NTSD
o Secretary-Typing	(A)	GS-318	5	12/28/87	87-154	BUD

BUD - Budget Division
FNS - Food and Nutrition Service
IRMD - Information Resource Management Division
NTSD - Nutrition Technical Services Division
PED - Personnel Division

Area of Consideration

(L) - Local Commuting Area
(FNS-H) - FNS Headquarters
(A) - All Sources
(G) - Government Wide
(USDA) - U.S. Department of Agriculture

Linda L. Boling
Editor, Public Information Staff

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